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HIGHLIGHTS FROM CCD COP-3 WEDNESDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 1999

Participants at CCD COP-3 continued their deliberations in two groups. The COW considered the Secretariat's medium-term strategy, the annex for conciliation and arbitration procedures, the implementation of the Convention in Africa, and other issues. The CST discussed traditional knowledge and early warning systems.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY: On the Secretariat's Medium-Term Strategy (ICCD/COP(3)/6), the EU stressed that the Secretariat is not an implementing body and should not overload itself with programme activities. He said it should provide core secretariat activities without duplicating the work of others, cooperate with the secretariats of other conventions, promote awareness and facilitate information dissemination and exchange. BENIN noted that the G-77/CHINA had prepared a draft decision and suggested that it form the starting point for informal consultations.

HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF GERMANY: The Secretariat reported that the headquarters agreement with the German government was signed on 18 August 1998 and entered into force on 8 July 1999.

ANNEX FOR CONCILIATION AND ARBITRATION PROCEDURES: The Secretariat introduced the documentation (ICCD/COP(3)/7), which contains annexes on arbitration and conciliation. He recalled that COP-2 decided to consider this issue in light of progress on the same issue in other relevant environmental conventions as well as consider, at COP-3, the establishment of an open-ended *ad hoc* group to examine and make recommendations on the issue. The G-77/CHINA supported the establishment of an open-ended *ad hoc* group and called for a decision to convene the group by COP-4 at the latest. The EU, supported by JAPAN, COLOMBIA, and SWITZERLAND, suggested that the Secretariat analyze progress in other conventions and prepare a new document for consideration at COP-4. CHINA underscored the need for a timetable to address the issue to ensure the participation of legal experts within country delegations.

RULE 47 OF RULES OF PROCEDURE (ICCD/COP(3)/13): The G-77/CHINA, supported by ALGERIA, called for resolution of this issue at COP-3. The EU suggested deferring it until COP-4 since other relevant conventions are presently considering it.

PROCEDURES FOR RESOLUTION OF QUESTIONS OF IMPLEMENTATION (ICCD/COP(3)/18): The G-77/CHINA stressed the need for a subsidiary body, similar to that in other environmental conventions, to review CCD implementation on a regular basis. He said a panel to consider national reports can only be a temporary arrangement. The EU reiterated the need to

carefully analyze the similar work under relevant conventions and proposed deferring this issue to COP-4. JAPAN noted that procedures and mechanisms vary in other conventions and said discussions should be carried out in the CCD context. Informal consultations facilitated by Michael Ellis (UK) convened to consider the medium-term strategy, arbitration and conciliation, Rule 47 and the review of convention implementation.

CCD IMPLEMENTATION IN AFRICA: CCD Executive Secretary Diallo introduced the documentation on CCD implementation (ICCD/COP(3)/5/Add.2, and A-E) and noted that 80% of African countries had submitted reports. MALI said the CCD provides an opportunity to integrate regional and national development and efficiently coordinate actions implemented under other conventions. COLOMBIA and the US said the African reports provide useful information and experiences that could be replicated in other regions. The EU stressed linking desertification with poverty and, with NIGERIA, the participation of all stakeholders. MALAWI said desertification should be addressed in the economic and development strategy of a country. MOROCCO and SENEGAL noted the role local communities play in the NAP process. A number of Parties expressed difficulties in NAP implementation due to a lack of resources. SUDAN noted the GEF's role in implementing NAPs. MALI, with CAPE VERDE, stressed seeking financial resources through the Global Mechanism and other institutions. JAPAN said the NAP reports are important for further analysis of concrete actions. The US noted that NAPs should address problems of implementation.

PANEL DISCUSSION ON CCD IMPLEMENTATION IN AFRICA: Pierre-Marc Johnson (Canada) chaired a panel discussion on CCD implementation. MOZAMBIQUE, on behalf of Southern Africa, presented measures being taken to ensure NAP implementation, including local level capacity building through consultative workshops and national forums on desertification. She reported difficulties in receiving support from international partners and said benchmarks and indicators were being developed at sub-regional and national levels. UGANDA, on behalf of the East African sub-region, highlighted the need to mainstream desertification issues with other strategies dealing with sustainable development and poverty eradication and stressed the importance of stakeholder participation in the NAP process, particularly the role of women and youth. He underlined the lack of funding for desertification control and stated that many countries were in the process of establishing national desertification funds.

CHAD, speaking for Central Africa, highlighted the difficulties posed by political instability in the region, inadequate financial resources and the absence of coordinating bodies, but stated that there is strong political will to implement the CCD. MALI, on behalf of the West African sub-region, said countries lacking

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progress were those with social conflict and political instability. He said difficulties in implementing the participatory approach due to varying levels of preparedness, inadequate resources and insufficient data available for planning had constrained the NAP process. He also said NGO partners often do not have the necessary resources and have been dependent on support from northern NGOs to carry out their work. MOROCCO summarized the report of the Northern African sub-region, underlining the importance of coordinating key actors and local level participation. He also called for greater cooperation with the donor community and project funding.

In discussing the regional reports, several Parties highlighted the problem of inadequate financial resources. MALAWI, with KENYA, said the Global Mechanism could assist in mobilizing resources. FINLAND noted that funding and partnerships were crucial for the involvement of donor agencies and stressed the importance of awareness-raising. EGYPT and ETHIOPIA underscored partnerships as key to combating desertification. BURKINA FASO stressed focusing on participation and people-centered activities. BENIN called for attention to countries experiencing problems with coastal erosion. Noting that its civil crisis has reduced its capacity to realize social and economic programmes, LIBERIA affirmed its commitment to implement the CCD. LIBYA called for long-term measures to improve natural resource use. SENEGAL requested elaboration on sub-regional NAPs. NIGERIA noted the need for information exchange in the sub-regions. TUNISIA highlighted the growing importance of cross-border projects.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The NETHERLANDS recalled the COP-1 decision that states that the COP's review of national reports should be based on Parties' reports together with advice from the CST and Global Mechanism and said this issue should be on the CST agenda. CST Chair Munemo (Zimbabwe) said the Bureau had advised that the COW was debating this matter. Reza Hosseinpour-Tavani (Iran) was elected CST Vice-Chair.

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE: Regarding the report of the *Ad Hoc* Panel (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/3), CST-2 Chair Mohammed Reza Jabbari (Iran) noted that the CST-2 Bureau had discussed and endorsed the Panel's recommendations. The Secretariat introduced the document on the ways and means to link the CST's work on traditional knowledge with similar work being undertaken by other conventions (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/3/Add.1). The US suggested creating database linkages between conventions and encouraging national focal points to collaborate on this and related conventions. BRAZIL highlighted the relevance of intellectual property rights protection on this issue.

On the Secretariat's synthesis on traditional knowledge in dryland ecosystems (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/Add.2), NORWAY highlighted the need for gender-sensitive indigenous knowledge networks. The US noted the role of community-based groups in bringing actors, such as farmers, pastoralists and scientists, together. SOUTH AFRICA noted the need to develop agricultural extension staff capacity to take into consideration social, gender and economic aspects of traditional systems.

SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF NETWORKS: Vice-Chair Smith noted that an informal group had agreed that Phase 2 should continue, although some technical and financial questions remained. He suggested that the Secretariat draft terms of reference for Phase 2 and submit them to the next CST Bureau intersessional. He further noted a consensus to focus on Africa by sub-region. FRANCE asked affected countries to elaborate their expectations from Phase 2. EGYPT said the Bureau was not the appropriate forum to determine the terms of reference for Phase 2.

ROSTER OF EXPERTS: Vice-Chair Smith reported that informal consultations had developed proposals for a draft decision, including a call for identifying experts according to broad discipline categories as well as specialization within each category, an invitation for Parties to supplement their submissions to ensure that underrepresented areas are addressed, and a request for the Secretariat to prepare a report on the use of the roster.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS (EWS): The Secretariat introduced the report on existing experience and institutions working on EWS (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/6). ISRAEL highlighted that EWS combine short-term drought preparedness and long-term desertification prevention and bring together social and natural sciences. JAPAN stressed the importance of space-based technologies for early warning. ITALY stressed that while space-based technologies are useful, most data collection and management requires only simple technologies. NORWAY highlighted its commitment to cooperating in efforts to enhance women's abilities to prepare for and cope with drought. The US noted the importance of integrating short and long-term data collection. NIGER said information is often not used in policy. WMO noted the importance of linking the data and observation work under the CBD, FCCC and CCD. NIGERIA suggested that EWS require a climate information system, national food production strategies, environmental management plans, and local water cycle management models.

UZBEKISTAN suggested establishing a group of experts to advise governments. ARGENTINA reminded delegates to consider who will use the system and for what purposes. The Chair asked delegates to discuss the proposal for an *ad hoc* panel. Many Parties supported developing a network of institutions active on EWS. FAO, OSS and the LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES noted the benefits of a network of institutions. TURKEY and the NETHERLANDS noted that many institutional networks already exist and KENYA suggested identifying the terms of reference first and then check if an existing network is already undertaking such work. The EU stressed the need to clearly specify the terms of reference for such a group. The Secretariat noted that the CST must identify how such a group would refer to the COP and said it would be difficult to establish such a group. ITALY and the US suggested an *ad hoc* panel of individuals that could invite interested institutions to participate. An open-ended working group was charged with developing all modalities for a related decision.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Some delegates expressed disappointment with the EU's repeated wish to defer outstanding issues to future COPs. They speculated whether this indicated a wavering of commitment by some Parties while others explained that several issues on the COP-3 agenda were not ripe for resolution. On a related issue, some delegates wondered if the G-77/China proposal to establish a committee to review implementation of the Convention is an effort to push for the development of tools to ensure CCD implementation or just another attempt to keep abreast with the other Rio conventions.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

COW: The COW is expected to continue its consideration of Convention implementation in Africa during morning and afternoon sessions in the Plenary Hall.

CST: The CST is expected to discuss draft decisions on its agenda items during morning and afternoon sessions in the Main Committee Hall.